



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
NOVEMBER 22, 2004

CONTACT: KELLY BROCKMAN  
615.741.6007 (OFFICE)

## **FIRE MARSHAL ISSUES WARNING ON HOLIDAY FIRE HAZARDS**

**CANDLES, SPACE HEATERS, DECORATIONS SHOULD BE USED SAFELY**

The soft glow of candles, a decorated tree, and luscious holiday foods are all part of Tennesseans' traditional holidays, but the State Fire Marshal's office is reminding Tennesseans to be fire-safe this season.

"The winter months are the prime season for fatal fires in Tennessee, and the tragedy is that most of these deaths are preventable," said Fire Marshal Paula Flowers. "Seasonal fires are attributed to the use of candles, fires from holiday decorations, cooking fires and the use of space heaters."

Commissioner Flowers offers these tips for keeping the holidays safe:

1. Space heaters need space – do not place anything that can burn within three feet of a space heater.
2. Candles should never be left unattended. Use particular caution when pairing candles with greenery and other decorations.
3. Cooking of any kind should not be left unattended, and a working fire extinguisher should be kept within easy reach.
4. Make sure your home smoke alarms are working.
5. Use these tips to keep your Christmas tree safe:
  - A. Choose a tree whose needles feel pliable and adhere to the branches
  - B. Cut off 1 inch from the bottom of the trunk so that it can "drink" water
  - C. Keep the tree watered at all times
  - D. Tree lights should only be on when the tree is attended
  - E. Replace non-working light bulbs or strands – they're cheap, your home isn't
  - F. Do not use candles on your tree
6. Fires in fireplaces should not be left to burn unattended.

"And while this isn't really a fire safety tip, I do want to point out that a smoke alarm – with batteries – makes a great Christmas gift. It can save the life of a loved one, and there's no better gift than that," said Flowers.

DAVY CROCKETT TOWER, 5TH FLOOR  
500 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY  
NASHVILLE, TN 37243  
615.741.2241